

March 3, 2011

Dear Esteemed Members of the Appropriations Committee:

First and foremost, thank you for your dedicated service to our State government.

I am writing to you today as the parent of my daughter's best friend since first grade, a fourteen-year-old girl who has been blind since birth.

It is very, very disturbing to me to hear about the proposed House Bill # 6380 to eliminate the Board of Education and Services for the Blind.

BESB has provided so many great tools to our school district and to this very special family - as I'm sure it has to many, many other families. I cannot believe that an agency that provides for such an extraordinary loss -VISION- could even be considered for elimination!.

I agree with my friend that the consolidation of this agency into two larger State agencies will jeopardize the cohesive structure of services that her daughter currently receives, and going forward, the seamless transition into adult services.

BESB has helped her family provide their daughter with opportunities to the expanded core curriculum because of their ability to respond in a timely, streamlined, effective way to purchase and/or offer programs and the necessary equipment that is critical for her to become independent. As an agency, I know that my friend's family has attended countless in-service workshops to learn how to parent their child with this profound loss. Parents need resources too!

The employees of this very specialized and dedicated division deserve to stay together under one centralized unit. The synergies, resources, effectiveness, and experience they share today cannot be duplicated. The citizens of this State who receive very specialized, explicit teaching should not be compromised.

I can't imagine what my life would be like without my vision...can you?
How would you grocery shop?

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration to this request. The
blind population of this State deserve a central voice to have their
needs met - please don't abandon them.

Sincerely,

Susan DiScipio

70 Soundview Drive

Easton, CT 06612

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